



POVERTY CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE IN POWYS

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CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN POWYS

There are **33,708** children and young people (0-25) living in Powys, **26,294** of them are 0-19 years old.

[To see where residents and young people in live in Powys click here](#)

There are 73 wards in Powys and 80 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA's), **6.3% of Powys' LSOA's are in the top 20% of most deprived in Wales (Ystradgynlais 1, Llandrindod East/ Llandrindod West, Newtown East, Newtown South and Welshpool Castle LSOA).**

[\[Local Authority Analysis \(gov.wales\)\]](#)

[To view how Powys ranks on the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation click here](#)

UNEMPLOYMENT AND LOW PAY IN POWYS

Unemployment and low wages are at the heart of child poverty. To understand these drivers of child poverty it is useful to examine some key local economic indicators of households.

- **20%** of working age people (aged 16-64 years) in Powys are **economically inactive** (December 2020). The national average for Wales is 24.3%. **Powys has the 3rd lowest rate of economically inactive residents among Welsh LAs**

[\[Source: Annual Population Survey © Crown Copyright\]](#)

[To view the economic activity rate of Powys and Wales click here](#)

- There are **3,020 people claiming unemployment benefits** living in Powys (Jobseeker's Allowance plus those who claim Universal Credit who are out of work). **This is 4% of persons aged 16-64. This is the second lowest rate among Welsh Local authorities.**

[\[Claimant count by Welsh local area, variable and month \(not seasonally adjusted\) - EXPERIMENTAL STATISTICS \(gov.wales\)\]](#)

[To view unemployment figure for Powys over time click here](#)

There were **4,324 children** (aged under 16) living in **Relative low income** families in 2020.

This is 20%. Powys ranks 14th out of 22 among Welsh Local Authorities.

There were **3,207 children** (aged under 16) living in **Absolute low income** families in 2020.

This is 15%. Powys ranks 7th highest among the 22 Welsh Local Authorities.

[\[Children in low income families: local area statistics 2014 to 2020 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)\]](#)

There were **4,088 families with children in absolute poverty** (income is below 60% of median income) **in 2019/20 in Powys**, and of these **1,248 (31%)** were **lone parent households.**

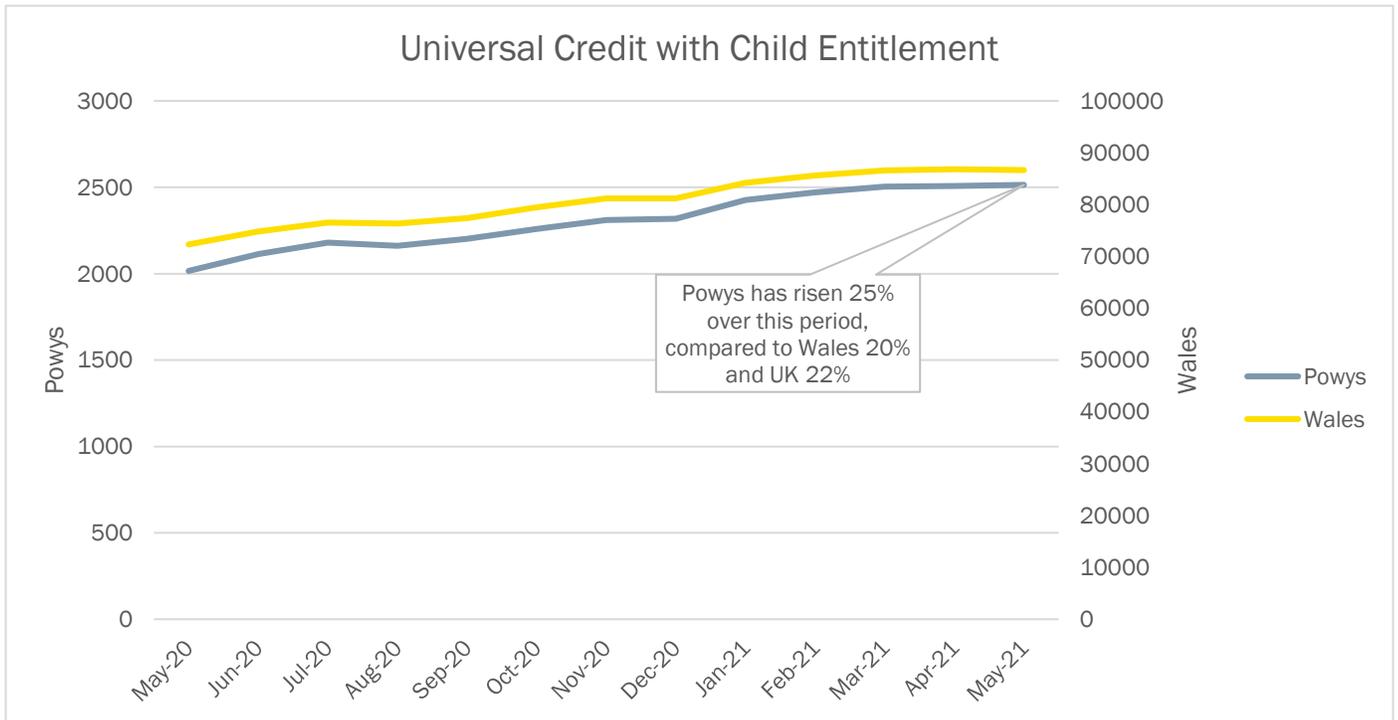
[\[Dept of Work and Pensions Absolute Low Income data Stat-Xplore - Table View \(dwp.gov.uk\)\]](#)

In Powys 55% (33,149) households earn below the Wales average household income of £34,700 (37% earn above). However, 70% (42,107) households earn below the UK average household income of £40,257 (24% earn above).

[\[CACI disposable income\]](#)

[To view household incomes figure for Powys and for Powys LSOAs click here](#)

UNIVERSAL CREDIT



Over the last year, the number of **Universal Credit claims with a child entitlement** in Powys has grown from **2,161** in May 2020 to **2,514** in May 2021, an **increase of 25%**. This increase is slightly ahead of Wales (20%) and UK (22%).

[Source: Dept. of Work and Pensions, © Crown Copyright]

In 2019/20, there were **4,223** children in **low income households*** where at least **one parent was working**, and **1,230** in households with **no working adults**. This is the highest number since 2015/16 (as far back as data is available).

78% of the children living in low income households in Powys were in ones **where an adult was working**, the **second highest** level among local authorities in Wales (Ceredigion was 0.4% higher).

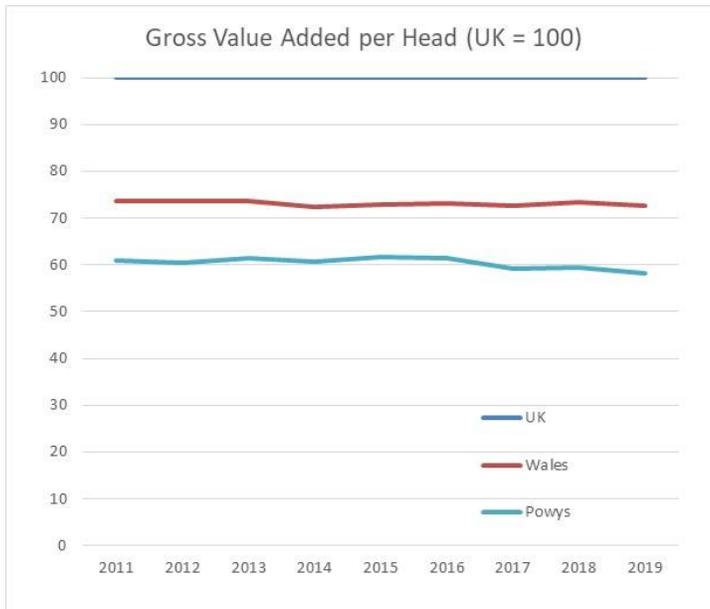
Powys has had the smallest increase between 2015/16 and 2019/20 in the number of children in low income households with an adult working. It increased by 15%, with the Welsh figure being 27%.

Median gross weekly earnings in Powys were £519 in 2020. This was below the Welsh average of £542.

[Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings © Crown Copyright]

**Low income households defined as where income is below 60% of median income*

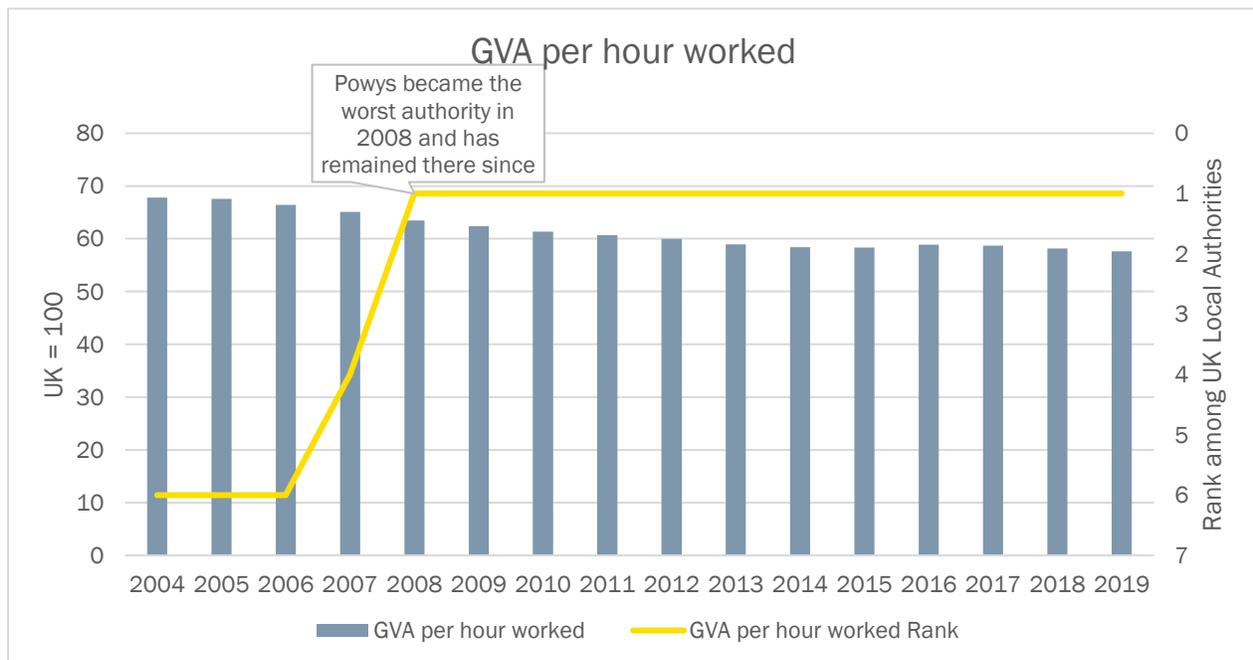
GROSS VALUE ADDED



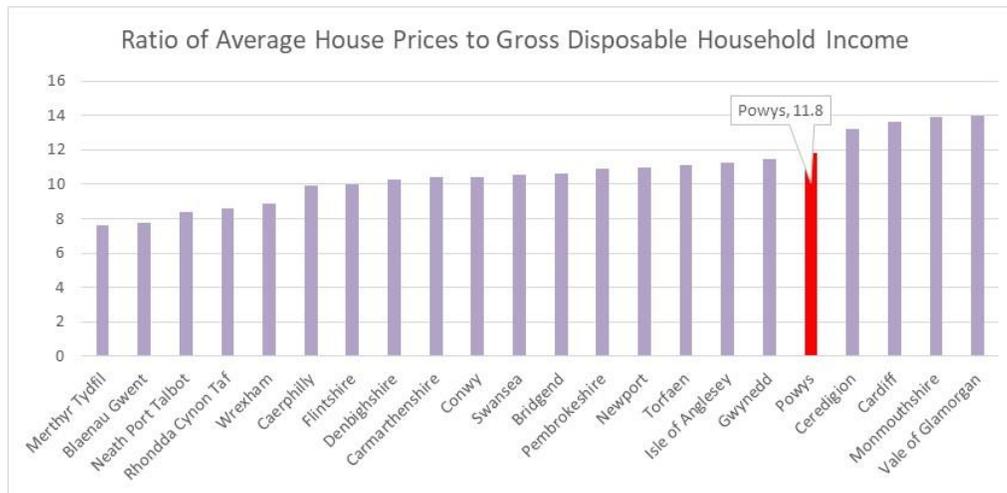
The left graph show **Gross Value Added per head** for Powys, Wales and the UK over the last 8 years. Powys has **fallen** from **61%** of UK average in 2011 to **58%** in 2019 (it peaked at 62% in 2015).

The below graph shows **GVA per hour worked** for Powys compared to the UK. This shows Powys falling from **69%** in 2004 to **58%** in 2019, and being the **lowest ranked authority in the UK since 2008**.

[Source: Office for National Statistics, Sub-national Gross Value Added © Crown Copyright]

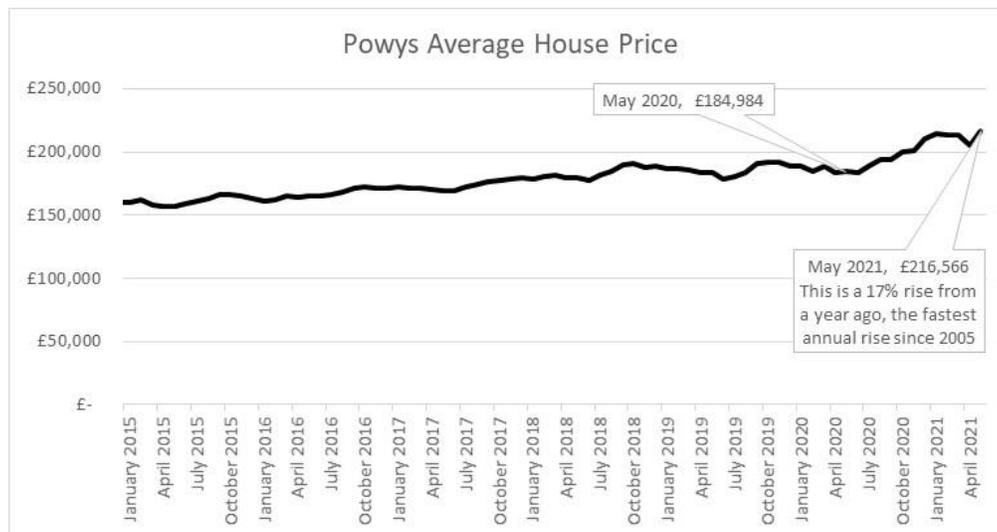


HOUSING AFFORDABILITY



The above chart tries to look at the relative cost of housing in each local authority, comparing average house prices to disposable income. This shows that **Powys ranks 5th highest** amongst the 22 Local Authorities in Wales **for having the most expensive houses compared to gross disposable income.**

From May 2020 to May 2021, **house prices in Powys increased by 17%** (Wales 13%).



Source: UK House Price Index May 2021, HM Land Registry © Crown Copyright. Gross Disposable Household Income, Office for National Statistics Regional Accounts © Crown Copyright

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN POWYS

Free School Meal eligibility is a key proxy measure of household income. At all key stages, **learners eligible for free school meals tend to perform significantly less well than those not eligible.**

Poor educational attainment is likely to harm children and young people's future life chances and perpetuate the cycle of poverty.

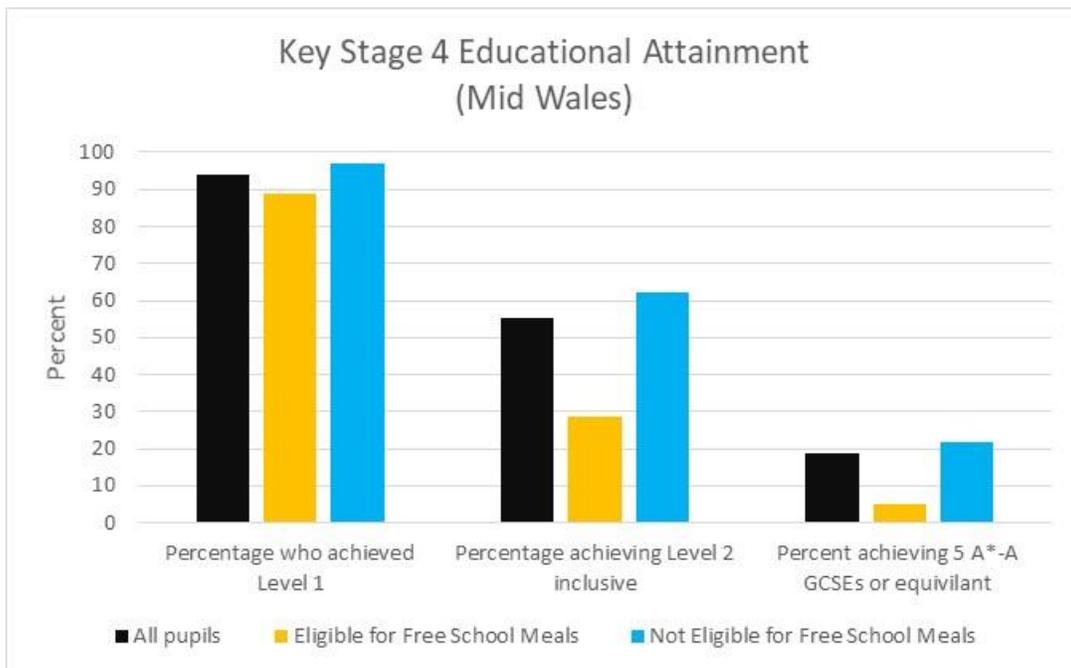
- **1,921 (12%)** of pupils in Powys are eligible for free school meals, **which is lower than the national Average of 18%.**
- **16%** of children and young people who are eligible for free school meals **are currently not receiving them.**

[Source: Welsh Government Free School Meal © Crown Copyright]

To view information about Powys' schools including free school meal eligibility and uptake please click here

- Educational attainment for pupils in Mid Wales at Key Stage 4 shows that **those eligible for FSM have lower outcomes than the rest of the population. The gap** between those receiving FSM and those who are not achieving Level 1* **is 8%.** At Level 2** it was **33%** and those achieving 5 A*-A grades **was 17%.**

Source: Welsh Government, Welsh Examinations Database/PLASC © Crown Copyright



Level 1 – 5 GCSE's A-G

**Level 2 – 5 GCSE's A*-C

- In 2020, **4.6%** of Year 13 school leavers in **Powys** were NEETs, compared to the **Welsh average of 3.7%**
[Year 13 Pupil Destinations from Schools in Wales 2020 | Careers Wales \(gov.wales\)](#)

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

TRANSFORMATION PROJECT -Affordable Housing	THIS TRANSFORMATION WILL ACHIEVE:	HOW WE WILL KNOW WE ARE SUCCEEDING:
 <p>We will ensure there is an increased range of affordable housing, so people have greater variety of where to live and stay in their communities.</p> <p>* This project also contributes to our Equality Objective 3.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Increased and better-quality output of affordable homes ➔ Increased housing that meets need at affordable, social rent levels ➔ Homes that make significant contributions to the lives and well-being of their occupants ➔ New homes will be energy efficient, and where possible, use locally sourced materials and locally based tradespeople in their construction 	<p>By the end of 2025 we will have built 250 new council-owned homes (dependant on availability of WG grant funding) (50 during 2021-22, 50 during 2022-23, 75 during 2023-24, and 75 during 2024-25).</p> <p>The number of additional affordable housing units delivered per 10,000 households will be 29 in 2021-22, 23 in 2022-23, 46 in 2023-24, and 36 in 2024-25 (at the end of 2019-20 this was 12.4).</p>

What did we do in 2020-21?

In 2020-21 the council had 118 Council properties under construction across the county on sites in Newtown, Llanidloes, Clyro and Brecon. A further 109 homes are at an advanced stage in the development process and plans are being drawn up to expand the programme.

Nineteen families have moved into the first homes to be completed at Maes Maendy in Brecon. This development includes a mix of 1-, 2-, 3-, and 4-bedroom homes, all let on secure tenancies with affordable rents.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 3: BY 2024, WE WILL IMPROVE THE AVAILABILITY OF ACCESSIBLE HOMES, ADAPTABLE HOMES AND LIFE-TIME HOMES, THAT PROVIDE SUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE ACCOMMODATION FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Why is this objective important and how will it support people with protected characteristics?

- ➔ Disabled people face a shortage of accessible and adaptable homes and long delays in making existing homes accessible.
- ➔ Powys is recording a high number of applicants that are in need of appropriate accommodation due to a medical need or a disability and whose existing home is not appropriate.
- ➔ The Equality and Human Rights recent housing inquiry showed that disabled people are demoralised and frustrated by the housing system and living in homes that do not meet their right to live independently.
- ➔ Disabled people can experience serious deterioration in their mental wellbeing due to living in unsuitable accommodation. Nearly three times as many disabled people report poor mental health than non-disabled people. By providing disabled people with suitable accommodation we aim to reduce the number of disabled people reporting poor mental health.
- ➔ Findings from our regional engagement showed that the groups rated as having the worst experiences of accessing housing than the population as a whole were, younger people and disabled people. Other groups were seen to have an approximately neutral experience of housing.

What we will do	How we will know we are succeeding
Between 2021 and 2024, the 'Fit for Life' programme will improve access arrangements to 500 homes. .	➔ By March 2022, 168 homes will benefit from the Fit for Life programme, followed by 168 by March 2023, and 164 by March 2024.
Between 2021 and 2024 the Disabled Facilities Grants programme will improve the quality of homes for 40 households each year.	➔ We will deliver aids, adaptations and disabled facility grant funded works within 130 calendar days.
We will ensure there is an increased range of affordable housing, so people have greater variety of where to live and stay in their communities.	➔ By the end of 2025 we will have built 250 new council-owned homes (dependant on availability of WG grant funding) (50 during 2021-22, 50 during 2022-23, 75 during 2023-24, and 75 during 2024-25). (This measure also supports the Affordable Housing Transformation Project.)

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 4: BY 2024, WE HELP PEOPLE TO GET THE SUPPORT THEY NEED TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

Why is this objective important and how will it support people with protected characteristics?

- ➔ Rough sleeping has increased, and levels of homelessness remain a concern.
- ➔ Between February 2019 and January 2020, 697 people across Powys have sought advice and assistance with regards to homelessness. 515 (74%) of these are age 25+ and 182 (26%) are aged 16-24.
- ➔ Anyone might be at risk of being homeless, however the young, single men, single females and single females with children are more likely to be in need. The top two reasons for being at risk of homelessness in Powys s were a breakdown in relationship, followed by parents no longer able, or willing to accommodate their children.
- ➔ Findings from regional engagement showed that the group rated as having the worst experience of accessing housing were younger people, reflecting the difficulties of young people finding affordable housing.

What we will do	How we will know we are succeeding
Expand and improve the effectiveness of locality-based support to help prevent homelessness and social isolation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Total number of people who received Housing Related Support in the quarter. (This will be Housing Support Grant and Homelessness Prevention Grant funded activity). ➔ Total number of service users no longer requiring support and/ or who have moved on from their current support services. ➔ Quarterly reports on the causes and incidence of homelessness, and the impact of work to prevent people becoming homeless .
Develop housing options for people with special accommodation needs (including young people, those with learning disabilities, people experiencing domestic or sexual abuse and people with disabilities and sensory impairment).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Total number of service users no longer requiring support and/ or who have moved on from their current support services.
Improve services to help people whose well-being and tenancy sustainability is at risk as a consequence of hoarding behaviours impairment).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Total number of people who received Housing Related Support in the quarter. (This will be Housing Support Grant and Homelessness Prevention Grant funded activity). ➔ Total number of service users no longer requiring support and/ or who have moved on from their current support services. ➔ Quarterly reports on the causes and incidence of homelessness, and the impact of work to prevent people becoming homeless.

What did we do in 2020-21?

The Housing Services Development Team have started a 'value engineering' exercise to make sure that the design, specification, and development of new municipal housing is as efficient as possible. The production of a suite of standard house types is under way, which will reduce costs. The detailed design of properties is being reviewed to make sure that chosen designs and materials do not add unnecessary costs to both initial construction and ongoing maintenance. The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Review for 2021-2022 is now underway to identify efficiencies that may allow the Council to generate surpluses to help support the continued development of council-owned homes.

EMPLOYMENT

IMPROVE SKILLS AND SUPPORT PEOPLE TO GET GOOD QUALITY JOBS

What we will do	How we will know we are succeeding	2021-22 Target	2022-23 Target	2023-24 Target	2024-25 Target
We will help support people into work and better paid employment opportunities.	Number of people progressing to employment as a result of taking part in employability activities.	50 people	50 people	50 people	50 people

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 1: BY 2024 WE WILL ENABLE PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY TO HAVE IMPROVED OPPORTUNITIES FOR VALUED OCCUPATION INCLUDING PAID EMPLOYMENT.

Why is this objective important and how will it support people with protected characteristics?

- Disabled people's employment rate is less than half that for non-disabled people and disabled people are less likely than non-disabled people to work in managerial or professional occupations, which tend to have higher pay.
- UK-wide research indicates that employment rates for disabled people vary considerably according to the type of disability or health condition, and that people with mental health conditions and those with learning difficulties have the lowest rates (Brown and Powell, 2018).
- Disabled people are more likely to live in poverty and experience severe material deprivation than non-disabled people. Median hourly earnings were higher in 2016/17 for non-disabled (£10.67) than for disabled (£9.72) employees, a disability pay gap of 8.9%.
- As well as helping disabled people to become independent, self-sufficient and feel valued, paid employment will provide social opportunities and support them to live full and productive lives.
- Findings from our regional engagement showed that the groups rated as having the worst experiences of work, compared with the population as a whole were disabled people and older people.

What we will do	How we will know we are succeeding
By March 2022, we will explore commissioning options to ensure that people have optimum opportunity to gain employment	Number of Adults with a disability being supported to undertake employment. Information recording mechanisms being developed and will be used to baseline appropriate targets when available.
By March 2023, we will use strengths-based approaches to ensure that supported employment converts to independent employment where possible.	
By March 2022, we will create a work, leisure and learning partnership (including citizens and carers) to lead to the development of employment opportunities.	

What did we do in 2020-21?

We continued to deliver the Communities for Work+ project aimed at getting people into work and improving their employability prospects. Between 2018 and 2021, 57 of the 83 of Workways+ participants were still in work after 6 months, and 79 of the 83 of Communities for Work+ participants were working full time (77 of the 83 participants gained permanent employment). The team received additional funding from Welsh Government, allowing the recruitment of two new members of staff, an employment mentor, and an employer liaison officer. This will enable us to provide an enhanced service to people in Powys in need of support, especially given the impact of COVID-19 on unemployment. For more information about the project and the help and support available, please visit: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/9667/Communities-for-Work-Powys> Our success measures and targets for 2020-21 2018-19 Performance 2019-20 Performance 2020-21 Performance Trend

IMPROVE THE SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

What we will do	How we will know we are succeeding	2021-22 Target	2022-23 Target	2023-24 Target	2024-25 Target
We will improve routes to employability into the Council through an apprenticeship scheme, promoted to schools and people who want to return to employment across the County, as part of this we will strengthen work based learning across the council and provide opportunities for work experience and employment / development in apprenticeship roles.	→ By March 2024, the Council will employ a further 27 apprentices as part of a new programme due to commence during 2021-22	10 Apprentices employed	12 Apprentices employed (total of 22 apprentices in the Council)	15 Apprentices employed (total of 27 in the council. The 10 employed in 2021-22 will have completed their apprenticeship)	To be agreed.
We will support all schools to improve routes to employability and further education.	→ By March 2025, the percentage of 16 years olds who are NOT in education, employment or training will be maintained below 2% (this was 1.7% in 2018/19).	<2%	<2%	<2%	<2%

What did we do in 2020-21?

The last data released showing the percentage of 16 years olds who were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) identified that Powys had the third lowest number of 'NEETS' in Wales (1.0% in 2019-20, which was below the 2% target).

CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 5: BY 2024, WE WILL IMPROVE OPPORTUNITIES AND OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY.

Why is this objective important and how will it support people with protected characteristics?

- ➔ Poverty has increased and a quarter of adults and a third of children are now living in poverty in Wales. In 2015/16 one in three (34.1%) children in Wales was living in poverty.
- ➔ In 2016, 9% of households across Wales were classified as 'food insecure'. Evidence from food banks suggests their use continues to rise. In 2017/18, the Trussell Trust's network of food banks in Wales provided 98,350 three-day emergency food supplies to people in crisis compared with 85,656 in 2015/16, an increase of 13%
- ➔ A survey of Trussell Trust food bank users across Britain found that certain groups may be more affected by food poverty. Single male households were the most common household type (38%), followed by female lone parents with children (13%).
- ➔ Features of socio-economic disadvantage are complex and are often interlinked. Early adverse life experiences, such as community or family poverty, have a detrimental effect on young adults' social economy attainment, such as income, assets and job quality.
- ➔ As part of developing our equality objectives, targeted focus groups were run with some mother and toddler groups and feedback from these confirmed that this should be a priority area for the council.

What we will do

During 2021 to 2024 we will support effective use of the Pupil Development Grant (PDG) to improve literacy and numeracy skills. This will include:

- ➔ Working with our schools to appropriately target the PDG and undertake an annual evaluation of the effectiveness / impact.

How we will know we are succeeding

- ➔ The percentage of pupils in receipt of Free School Meals attaining the Foundation Phase Indicator will be 75% by July 2023.
- ➔ The percentage of pupils in receipt of Free School Meals attaining the CSI at Key Stage 2 will be 75% by July 2023.
- ➔ The percentage of pupils in receipt of Free School Meals attaining the CSI at Key Stage 3 will be 78% by July 2023.
- ➔ The average Capped 9-point score of pupils in receipt of Free School Meals will be 340 points by July 2023.



During 2021 to 2024 we will support school to ensure all children in Powys are able to attend school without the associated financial costs. Our actions (outlined below) will lead to equality of opportunity for all.

- ➔ During 2021-22, we will undertake an engagement exercise with schools and pupils about the establishment of a schools savings scheme (and work to establish the scheme in 2022-23).
- ➔ By March 2022, we will trial a programme of youth outreach and virtual support.
- ➔ By March 2023, we will ensure that the Welsh Government's Period Dignity programme is fully supported in all our schools.
- ➔ By March 2024, we will raise awareness of Free School Meals entitlement and our Income and Awards department will identify children who are entitled to free school meals and target advice to encourage take up.
- ➔ By 2024, we will increase the number of schools that participate in the School Holiday Enrichment Programme (SHEP).
- ➔ We will continue to provide Pupil Development Grant Access grants to eligible parents for school uniform, other clothing worn at school such as sports kits, equipment for out-of-school-hours trips (including outdoor learning) and equipment for activities within the curriculum such as design and technology.

During 2021 to 2024 we will provide families with support and advice to help them reduce costs of living. This will include:

- ➔ By March 2022, we will provide Financial Hardship support through a Council Tax scheme.
- ➔ By 2022, we will provide Housing Support through a Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme.
- ➔ Between 2021 and 2024, we will undertake a fuel poverty take up exercise with NEST.
- ➔ We will explore providing additional support by reducing council tax for foster carers.
- ➔ We will support families who are in 'in work' poverty in individual cases through debt / budgeting / benefits optimisation and fuel support.

- ➔ Between 2021 and 2025, an increased number of children that are entitled to Free School Meals will take up the service.
- ➔ Increased number of pupils using the School Holiday Enrichment Programme (SHEP) over the summer holidays which benefits their health & wellbeing. (This objective also supports Well-being Objective 4.)
- ➔ Between 2021 and 2025, we will report on the value of Pupil Development Grant Access grants provided.

- ➔ Between 2021 and 2025, we will identify the number of families that receive financial (debt / budgeting / benefits) advice from the Council.

What did we do in 2020-21?

- The support provided to disadvantaged pupils during the COVID-19 period has been significant, with nearly all accessing childcare provision, digital devices being provided to ensure they are not disadvantaged, and many schools providing weekly welfare support for these learners.
- During the pandemic supermarket vouchers and direct BACS payments were issued to all entitled free school meal families/pupils. We saw a 19.5% increase from December 2019 to December 2020 in free school meal entitlement claims. The Council regularly informs schools and posts to all Parents via the ParentPay communication system to sign post free school meals.
- An annual review uptake exercise was undertaken to identify children who are entitled to free school meals and target advice to encourage take up and 25 claims were added.
- We continued to support families with the cost of living through advice and assistance. During the year, 742 awards for school clothing grants have been made to the value of £105,075; £11,076,591 has been paid out to 10,214 customers through the council tax reductions scheme and we provided Discretionary Housing Payment support to help residents with housing related issues to the value of £585,000.
- We are committed to supporting the Period Dignity initiative and will be extending its contract to provide feminine hygiene products to all our schools, including via the coin-free vending machines in our secondary schools. Due to the success of the coin-free vending machines, secondary schools have been offered further units and larger primary schools have also been given the opportunity to have units installed. Period dignity vouchers were issued to the families of 657 young girls aged 9 and over who were in receipt of free school meals to support with the cost of feminine hygiene products during lockdown. Following the success of the teen starter pack which were issued during 2020, further stock has been purchased for each girl aged 9 and over, in preparation for the new financial year. Joint working with Youth Services has ensured that packs of teen starter packs are also available to young people through outreach services and youth clubs.
- As part of their school improvement plans, all schools identified how they use their Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) to support vulnerable learners. Provision is in place for educational support for children who are entitled to free school meals during periods when the schools are closed. Welsh Government have allowed schools to use the PDG funding up to the end of the summer term 2021 due to the fact schools have been providing remote learning for most pupils during the spring term 2021.
- Nearly all governing bodies continue to give due consideration to the Welsh Government School Uniform Guidance. As part of the measures to re-open schools a Powys wide decision was made to relax uniform rules for practical reasons as well as the additional costs to families potentially needing to purchase new uniform. Letters have been issued to all eligible families who have children in receipt of free school meals, or who are caring for children looked after, to inform them that the PDG Access uniform grant is available and provide details of how to claim. 79% made a claim.

REFERENCE TO SCHOOL HOLIDAY ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME

STRENGTHEN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITIES

What we will do	How we will know we are succeeding	2021-22 Target	2022-23 Target	2023-24 Target	2024-25 Target
We will work with partners and organisations to support and deliver a range of opportunities for culture and leisure throughout Powys, with a focus on the health and well-being agenda.	→ At least 2% more people are physically active throughout Powys per year as a result of participating in the range of schemes on offer.*	1,573,134	1,604,596	1,636,688	1,669,421
	→ Attendance (footfall) at libraries and museums (includes virtual visits for libraries)*	200,000	210,000	220,000	230,000
	→ Participation in arts & cultural events; activities; workshops*	8,500	8,500	8,500	8,500
	→ Attendance at arts and cultural events; performances; exhibitions (including virtual)*	Libraries: 1,000 Arts: 150,000	Libraries: 1,100 Arts: 150,000	Libraries: 1,200 Arts: 150,000	Libraries: 1,300 Arts: 150,000
	→ Increased number of pupils using the School Holiday Enrichment Programme (SHEP) programme over the summer holidays which benefits their health & wellbeing.	400 pupils (10 schools)	600 pupils (15 schools)	800 pupils (20 schools)	1,000 pupils (25 schools)
* these targets will be subject to lockdown restrictions.					

What did we do in 2020-21?

Due to COVID-19, the School Holiday Enrichment Programme was cancelled and data is not available. Five schools have signed up to provide this during 2021.

REFERENCE TO POVERTY IN POINT 3

EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 6: BY 2024, WE WILL IMPROVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITIES TO BECOME MORE DIGITALLY INCLUSIVE, ENABLING THEM TO EASILY ACCESS THE SERVICES THEY NEED AND PARTICIPATE FULLY IN EVERYDAY LIFE.

Why is this objective important and how will it support people with protected characteristics?

- Those who are considered "digitally excluded" are not able to enjoy the benefits of being online and use technology confidently to improve their day-to-day lives.
- Digital is unavoidable in our daily lives. Digitally excluded people miss out on the social and economic benefits the internet provides.
- With increasing digitalisation of services and communication, being older, a disabled person, having no qualifications, low income or living in social housing remain risk factors for digital exclusion, particularly in rural areas of Wales. The proportion of older people who use the internet was 22% in 2012/13 increasing to 40% in 2016/17. In 2016/17 they remained the age group with the lowest proportion of internet users.
- In Wales, households in social housing were less likely to have access to the internet in 2016/17 (72%) compared with those in privately rented or owner-occupied housing (88% and 87%).
- Findings from our regional engagement survey showed that the groups rated as having the worst experiences of access to information and digital services than the population as a whole were older People, disabled people and BME people. Younger people were perceived to have a much greater positive experience of accessing information and digital services.

What we will do	How we will know we are succeeding
Through the Hwb programme we will enable safe smart technology in schools and give pupils equitable access, through improved network infrastructure by March 2022.	→ By March 2022, all schools will have an environment to deliver blended learning (classroom and home based together) through digital technology.
By March 2022, we will implement integrated telephony and web channels to improve accessibility and user experience when contacting the Council.	Measures to be determined.
By 2024, we will understand how to inspire and encourage our local digital economy to use the transformative power of technology and encourage engineers and developers to build the next wave of inclusive technology for people with disabilities, by research to understand the gap in provision.	Measures to be determined.